United Nations A/61/PV.97

General Assembly
Sixty-first session

Official Records

97th plenary meeting
Thursday, 17 May 2007, 10 a.m.
New York

President: Ms. Al-Khalifa ..... (Bahrain)

The meeting was called to order at 10.20 a.m.

Agenda item 122 (*continued*)

Scale of assessments for the apportionment of the expenses of the United Nations (A/61/709/Add.6)

The President: I would like to inform members that, since the issuance of documents A/61/709 and Add.1 to Add.5, Seychelles has made the necessary payment to reduce its arrears below the amount specified in Article 19 of the Charter.

May I take it that the General Assembly duly takes note of that information?

It was so decided.

The President: That information will be reflected in document A/61/709/Add.6, to be issued.

Agenda item 105 (*continued*)

Elections to fill vacancies in subsidiary organs and other elections

(e) Election of fourteen members of the Human Rights Council

The President: Members will recall that, at its 81st plenary meeting, on 9 May 2006, the General Assembly, under the terms of reference outlined in resolution 60/251 of 15 March 2006, elected 47 members of the Human Rights Council.

At the same meeting, in accordance with paragraph 14 of resolution 60/251 and, by a drawing of lots, 14 Member States from among the 47 were chosen for a one-year term of office ending on 18 June 2007, 15 Member States for a two-year term and 18 Member States for a three-year term.

The 14 seats with a one-year term of office were distributed among the regional groups as follows: four seats for the Group of African States; four seats for the Group of Asian States; two seats for the Group of Eastern European States; two seats for the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States; and two seats for the Group of Western European and other States.

The 14 Member States whose term will expire on 19 June 2007 are as follows: Algeria, Argentina, Bahrain, the Czech Republic, Ecuador, Finland, India, Indonesia, Morocco, the Netherlands, the Philippines, Poland, South Africa and Tunisia. Those Member States are eligible for immediate re-election.

The General Assembly will now proceed to the election of the 14 members of the Human Rights Council.

In accordance with resolution 60/251, membership in the Council shall be open to all States Members of the United Nations and the members of the Council shall serve for a period of three years and shall not be eligible for immediate re-election after two consecutive terms. The members of the Council shall be elected directly and individually, by secret ballot, by the majority of the members of the General Assembly. Accordingly, for the present election, 97 votes constitute a majority in the General Assembly that has a membership of 192 Member States.

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07-34765 (E)

When electing members of the Council, Member States shall take into account the contribution of candidates to the promotion and protection of human rights and their voluntary pledges and commitments made thereto.

The election will be held in accordance with the relevant rules of procedures of the General Assembly on elections. For this election, rules 92 and 94 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly shall be applied.

Consistent with the practice of the General Assembly, if more than the required number of Member States has obtained the votes of the majority of the members of the Assembly on the same ballot, those Member States which have obtained the largest number of votes above the required majority will be considered as elected, up to the number of seats to be filled. Also, consistent with past practice, in the case of a tie vote for a remaining seat, there will be a special restricted ballot limited to those candidates that have obtained an equal number of votes.

May I take it that the General Assembly agrees to these procedures?

It was so decided.

The President: Accordingly, the election shall be held by secret ballot, and there shall be no nominations.

Again, I should like to repeat that the 14 vacant seats are to be filled from among the regional groups as follows: four seats from among the Group of African States; four seats from among the Group of Asian States; two seats from among the Group of Eastern European States; two seats from among the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States; and two seats from among the Group of Western European and other States. The ballot papers reflect that pattern.

I should also like to repeat that, as was stated in resolution 60/251, when electing members of the Council, Member States shall take into account the contribution of candidates to the promotion and protection of human rights and their voluntary pledges and commitments made thereto.

Before we begin the voting process, I should like to remind members that, pursuant to rule 88 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, no representative shall interrupt the voting except on a point of order on the actual conduct of the voting.

I should like to seek the usual cooperation of representatives during the time when the General Assembly is conducting elections. Please be reminded that during the voting procedure, all campaigning should cease in the General Assembly Hall. This means that, once the meeting has begun, no more campaign material can be distributed inside the Hall. All representatives are also requested to remain at their seats so that the voting process can proceed in an orderly manner. I thank members for their cooperation.

We shall now begin the voting process.

Ballot papers marked "A", "B", "C", "D" and "E" will now be distributed. Ballot A has four blank lines for the four seats for the African States Group. Ballot B also has four blank lines for the four seats for the Asian States Group. Ballot C has two blank lines for the two seats for the Eastern European States Group. Ballot D has two blank lines for the two seats for the Latin American and Caribbean States Group. Ballot E has two blank lines for the two seats for the Western European and other States Group.

I request representatives to use only those ballot papers and to write on them the names of the States for which they wish to vote. A ballot paper containing more names from the relevant region than the number of seats assigned to it will be declared invalid. If a ballot paper contains names of Member States which do not belong to that region, those names will not be counted at all.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Zhou Feng (China), Mr. Tegos (Greece), Ms. Richards McKay (Jamaica), Mrs. Cerere (Kenya), Mrs. Espinosa (Mexico), Mr. Wigwe (Nigeria), Mr. Mićić (Serbia) and Ms. Al-Shamisi (United Arab Emirates) acted as tellers.

A vote was taken by secret ballot.

The meeting was suspended at 10.40 a.m. and resumed at 12.25 a.m.

The President: The result of the voting is as follows:

Group A – African States

Number of ballot papers:	190
Number of invalid ballots:	0
Number of valid ballots:	190

Abstentions:	2
Required majority:	97
Number of votes obtained:	
Madagascar	182
South Africa	175
Angola	172
Egypt	168
Tunisia	1
Morocco	1

Group B – Asian States

Number of ballot papers:	190
Number of invalid ballots:	0
Number of valid ballots:	190
Abstentions:	0
Required majority:	97
Number of votes obtained:	
India	185
Indonesia	182
Philippines	179
Qatar	170
Timor-Leste	1
Bahrain	1

Group C – Eastern European States

Number of ballot papers:	190
Number of invalid ballots:	0
Number of valid ballots:	190
Abstentions:	3
Required majority:	97
Number of votes obtained:	
Slovenia	168
Bosnia and Herzegovina	95
Belarus	78

Group D – Latin American and Caribbean States

Number of ballot papers:	190
Number of invalid ballots:	0
Number of valid ballots:	190
Abstentions:	10
Required majority:	97
Number of votes obtained:	
Nicaragua	174
Bolivia	169
Honduras	2
Paraguay	2
Belize	1
Chile	1
Costa Rica	1

Group E – Western European and Other States

Number of ballot papers:	190
Number of invalid ballots:	0
Number of valid ballots:	190
Abstentions:	8
Required majority:	97
Number of votes obtained:	
Netherlands	121
Denmark	114
Italy	114
Austria	1
Greece	1
Portugal	1

The President: A total of 14 States have obtained the required majority of the Members of the General Assembly, among which Denmark and Italy have obtained an equal number of votes and will therefore require another round of balloting.

Having obtained the required majority, the following 12 States have thus been elected members of the Human Rights Council for a three-year term of office beginning on 20 June 2007: Angola, Bolivia, Egypt, India, Indonesia, Madagascar, Netherlands, Nicaragua, Philippines, Qatar, Slovenia and South Africa.

There still remain two seats to be filled: one seat from among the Group of Eastern European States and one seat from among the Group of Western European and Other States. We shall therefore proceed to the first restricted ballot.

This second round of balloting shall be restricted to the two States from among the Group of Eastern European States that were not elected but obtained the largest number of votes in the previous ballot, namely Belarus and Bosnia and Herzegovina, and the two States from among the Group of Western European and Other States that have obtained an equal number of votes in the previous ballot, namely Denmark and Italy. This is in accordance with rule 94 of the rules of procedure.

We shall now begin the voting process. Ballot papers marked "C" and "E" will now be distributed. May I ask representatives to write on the ballot papers the names of the States for which they wish to vote.

Ballot papers marked "C", for the Eastern European States Group, will be declared invalid if they contain the name of a State other than Belarus or

Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as if they contain the name of more than one State.

Ballot papers marked "E" for the Western European and Other States Group will be declared invalid if they contain the name of a State other than Denmark or Italy, as well as if they contain the name of more than one State.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Zhou Feng (China), Mrs. Cerere (Kenya), Mrs. Espinosa (Mexico), Mr. Wigwe (Nigeria) and Ms. Al-Shamisi (United Arab Emirates) acted as tellers.

A vote was taken by secret ballot.

The meeting was suspended at 12.40 p.m. and resumed at 1 p.m.

The President: The result of the voting is as follows:

Group C – Eastern European States

Number of ballot papers:	190
Number of invalid ballots:	0
Number of valid ballots:	190
Abstentions:	6
Required majority:	97
Number of votes obtained:	
Bosnia and Herzegovina	112
Belarus	72

Group E – Western European and Other States

Number of ballot papers:	190
Number of invalid ballots:	1
Number of valid ballots:	189
Abstentions:	2
Required majority:	97
Number of votes obtained:	
Italy	101
Denmark	86

The President: Having obtained the votes of the required majority of the members of the General Assembly, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Italy have been elected members of the Human Rights Council for a three-year term of office beginning on 19 June 2007.

The following 14 States have thus been elected members of the Human Rights Council for a three-year term of office beginning 20 June 2007: Angola, Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Egypt, India, Indonesia, Italy, Madagascar, Netherlands, Nicaragua, Philippines, Qatar, Slovenia and South Africa.

I congratulate those States that have been elected members of the Human Rights Council, and I thank the tellers for their assistance in this election.

This concludes our consideration of sub-item (e) of agenda item 105.

The meeting rose at 1.05 p.m.